

Cooks receive regional award for excellence

Spc. Steven J. Schneider
1st Corps Public Affairs

The cooks at the 201st Military Intelligence Brigade Dining Facility received an award Feb. 25 for being the Installation Management Agency Northwest Region's runner-up in the small dining facility category of the Philip A. Connelly Awards Program for Excellence.

The Soldiers also received an award for having the best decorated facility for Thanksgiving for the second straight year.

The dining facility was run by cooks from 62nd Medical Brigade, 29th Signal Battalion and 502nd Military Intelligence Battalion when the competition was judged. Most of the cooks are currently deployed to Iraq with their respective units, but about 15 were on hand to receive coins and trophies for their efforts.

"I'm amazed and so satisfied with this dining facility," said Col. Michael K. Stephenson, garrison commander. "You folks are doing a great job, and it doesn't go unnoticed."

Stephenson said the great cooking at Fort Lewis could only be due to the effort the Soldiers put in.

"There's a lot of attention to detail," said Staff Sgt. Jerome Potapoff, senior food operations sergeant, 62nd Medical Brigade. "The small details can add up to a lot."

Cooking is an art as well as a craft and Potapoff said using each cook in a way to draw on their strengths helped provide a



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Spc. Rebecca Jordan receives a coin from Col. Michael K. Stephenson, garrison commander, for her work in helping the Dining Facility earn an award for excellence.

quality dining experience.

"We all have good teamwork," said Sgt. Robert E. Zipp, shift leader, 29th Signal Battalion. "We all know what we're doing and what Soldier fits best in each position."

Teamwork was the key to the success, said Potapoff.

"Everybody works together well," said Spc. Rebecca Jordan, cook, 62nd Medical Bde. "We have a good team."

The NCO leadership was vital to the dining facility's success, Zipp said.

"It has a lot to do with NCOs training the Soldiers on what they're doing," he said. "We have to make sure every Soldier knows how to do every job, so they can cover down in case someone's not there."

Potapoff said the award helps recog-

nize all the hard work, all the Soldiers put in.

"On a typical day, we have to be here at 4:30 a.m., and you're working a 12 to 14 hour day," said Sgt. Rashunda Taylor, 1st Cook, 502nd MI Bn.

The long hours don't bother the dining facility's cooks, Potapoff said.

"These Soldiers know it's their job," Potapoff said. "They don't have any gripes about it. They're used to the long hours."

Even though the Soldiers are just doing their jobs, Potapoff is still proud of them.

"I would just like to give each one of them (the cooks) a pat on the back and tell them they did a good job," he said. "Without them, the mission would not get accomplished."

OSC welfare funds available to needy area organizations

By Barbara L. Sellers
Northwest Guardian

What organizations need money for a worthy cause? That is the question, and the Officer Spouses Club could have the answer.

"We are still accepting welfare requests and will give away a total of more than \$13,000," said Joanne Scully, welfare chairperson for OSC. "We have already given away \$1,500 to Army Community Service for their holiday food basket program, \$500 to the Fort Lewis American Red Cross for the Soldier Readiness Processing site and \$200 to the Lakes High School cheer squad to help them go to national competition. So that adds up to \$2,200 that we have already given out."

After advertising and taking welfare requests for a few months, the OSC will organize an eight-member committee to determine which organizations will get what amount of money, Scully said.

"We will meet March 25 and come up with recommendations on how the money should be awarded," she said. "We brief it at our April board meeting for the board's approval of the committee's recommendations. Any requests for more than \$500 must be approved by the general membership at that time. Then our treasurer will issue the checks and give them to me to be mailed out."

"We especially try to support organizations that provide services to Soldiers and family members on post, Scully said. "To do that, welfare requests are divided into five different priority levels."

They are:

- Organizations that have always received the majority of their emergency money from OSC.

- Military organizations on Fort Lewis that request funding.

- Non-military organizations on Fort Lewis that work to support families.

- Organizations not on Fort Lewis that work to benefit the military.

- Organizations not on Fort Lewis that work for the good of community projects.

Altogether, 25 organizations requested funds from last year's OSC board.

"We try to support as many organizations as we can," Scully said. "

Of course, the more money OSC makes throughout the year, the more money it can give away, and the majority of money always comes from the club's holiday bazaar, Scully said.

"Although attendance at our last holiday bazaar went down, the amount of money we made went up," said Lisa Jones, co-chair for the OSC bazaar. "So we were really happy about that. We always strive to make a little bit more than we did the year before."

Examples of products and items offered year round at OSC monthly sales include items like Afghans, pottery and Army and hooah pins, Scully said.

The 24th annual holiday bazaar has traditionally been scheduled for the first weekend in November, and OSC solicits for vendors throughout the year, she said. Now vendors with crafts who want to get involved can write to OSC at P.O. Box 33044, Fort Lewis, WA 98444.

For more information, call 967-6571.